

**NASS**

New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture

22 Bridge St, Third Floor

PO Box 1444
Concord, NH 03302

Aubrey R. Davis, Director
www.usda.gov/nass

603-224-9639

Fax: 603-225-1434
nass-nh@nass.usda.gov



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USDA ANNUAL TREE FRUIT INQUIRY

As the 2001 fruit harvesting season draws to a close, it is once again time to measure the production of apples, peaches and pears in the New England states. The New England Agricultural Statistics Service is responsible for conducting this annual survey of tree fruit producers within the region. Grower response to this survey will update earlier production forecasts for apples in all six states, peaches in Connecticut and Massachusetts and pears in Connecticut. It will also establish the production figures to be used by the fruit industry until utilization and price estimates are available in July 2002.

After harvest is complete in mid-October, apple, peach and pear producers nationwide will be asked to provide total production, and preliminary price information for the 2001 crop. Here in New England, questionnaires will be mailed directly to approximately 700 tree fruit producers. If necessary, interviewers will follow-up with telephone or personal contacts through the middle of November. Response to the survey is voluntary, however cooperation from all growers is essential to provide an accurate picture of the tree fruit industry in this region. **Individual reports are kept strictly confidential**, exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, and used only with other reports for statistical purposes.

Based on grower responses to the 2001 Fruit Inquiry conducted in late July, total apple production in New England is expected to total 4.0 million bushels (42-pound units), 10 percent below the 2000 crop. A severe frost on May 7th hit when the fruit trees in the southern New England states were at peak bloom, and damage was extensive at many locations. Warm and dry weather throughout the end of May provided favorable conditions for pollination, however the dry weather continued throughout the summer. As apple harvest gained momentum in early September, area crop specialists placed condition from good to very poor north to south. Fruit size was generally small due to the extended period without moisture. Connecticut pear growers were devastated by the May 7, 2001 frost. Size of fruit was generally medium, but the crop was reported in poor condition. As of August 1, 2001, Connecticut pear producers had expected to harvest 500 tons, 60 percent less than the previous year's output. Peach growers in Connecticut and Massachusetts were contacted July 1 to forecast the size of the 2001 peach crop. Based on their responses at that time, production was expected to total 76,000 bushels (48-pound units), 12 percent less than in 2000.

The national survey results will be available in the **Non-Citrus Fruit and Nuts, Annual** report from Washington, D.C. in January 2002. All reports are available on the Internet within a few minutes of the scheduled release time. New England statistics are re-printed in the January issue of the **Ag Review**. The monthly New England **Ag Review** is also available on the Internet monthly, but complimentary copies can be mailed to survey participants upon request.

[The New England Agricultural Statistics Service is a field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Located in Concord, New Hampshire, it is responsible for agricultural statistics in all six states in the region. The office can be reached at 1-800-642-9567 or through E-mail at nass-nh@nass.usda.gov. All national statistics and state level newsletters are available free from E-mail subscriptions and on the Internet at <http://www.usda.gov/nass/>.]

For More Information Contact: Robin Helrich at 1-800-642-9571.